


1959

## News and Notes

Florida Historical Society  
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## NEWS AND NOTES

### *News of Local Historical Societies*

*Before it is too late.* The startling pace of fast-moving Florida today affords the history-minded Floridian an exceptional obligation to record the passing scene before it is too late. The tape-recording of reminiscences is especially important. A collection of current photographs (newspaper editors can be most helpful) with detailed identifications, will prove an invaluable addition to your archives. There are ways in which you can collect today for your historical library of tomorrow.

For the initial organization of a historical society, or as a refresher, the following publication will be of special help: *Organizing a Local Historical Society* by Clement M. Silvestro, Executive Secretary, The American Association for State and Local History, 816 State Street, Madison 6, Wisconsin. Additional copies to members of that Society, \$.50; non-members, \$.75 a single copy.

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The Lake Worth Pioneers Association elected Will H. Sanders, Inverness, as its president at the May meeting of the group held at Pioneer Park, West Palm Beach. Other officers elected were Thomas T. Reese, Jr., Palm Beach, first vice president; Mrs. D. F. Dunkle, West Palm Beach, second vice president; Stafford B. Beach, Hypoluxo Island, treasurer; Mrs. Louis P. Spencer, West Palm Beach, secretary and Mrs. Claramae Allen, West Palm Beach, historian.

The meeting featured several talks reminiscing of the early days in the area and in other parts of the state. Approximately 130 persons were in attendance at the meeting and picnic lunch.

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The Martin County Historical Society has started a "Library of Living History." The Old-Timers May meeting and picnic at the Civic Center in Stuart was fully tape-recorded for the library. Plans have been made to interview many of the area's pioneers.

Ernest F. Lyons, speaking before the Society's annual meeting, called attention to the rich history of the county and sug-

gested that a book be written on its little-known early history, after thorough search of source materials. He credited David O. True of Miami with uncovering evidence that the first land-fall in Florida could well have been in the vicinity of Martin County.

Claude O. Rainey is president of the Society. Serving with him are Mrs. John W. Stokes, vice president; William Porter, treasurer and Miss Lillian Armstrong, secretary. Stephen Schmidt is the director of the House of Refuge Museum. The Martin County Historical Commission, created in August of last year, operates the museum jointly with the Society.

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Mrs. C. E. Shaw of Eustis was reelected president of the Lake County Historical Society at its April meeting. Miss Elizabeth D. Burleigh, Tavares, was named vice president; F. E. Owens, Tavares, secretary-treasurer; Mrs. Doris Babb, Tavares, corresponding secretary and Miss Jean Macdonald, Tavares, librarian. The following will serve as directors: Mrs. Albert Goodwin, G. G. Ware, Leesburg, L. D. Edge, Groveland, J. C. Cowart, Mascotte, Oakley Seaver, Clermont, C. B. Treadway, Tavares, O. M. Simpson, Mount Dora, T. Stin Haselton, Eustis, H. Lightfoot, Umatilla and Fred Cross, Altoona.

The Society publishes an interesting leaflet, "Lake County Then and Now," on the history of the area.

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Charlton W. Tebeau of the University of Miami was the guest speaker at the January meeting of the St. Lucie Historical Society in Fort Pierce. Dr. Tebeau reviewed his recently published book, *Florida's Last Frontier*, and showed colored slides of the southwestern coast of Florida, the scene of the book.

Although this Society is relatively new, its interesting monthly meetings have resulted in a growing membership. Sound recordings of programs and of interviews are featured.

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The Palm Beach Historical Society heard lively stories of the early days in Palm Beach at its January meeting. Charles L. Pierce of Fort Lauderdale, whose grandfather pioneered in

the area a mere 80 years ago, was the narrator. How the palm trees came to Palm Beach, the first schooner service to Jacksonville, the first hotel, the excitement of the first election and unusual features of the mail service were among the many incidents told.

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Rembert W. Patrick, who holds the first Julien C. Yonge graduate research professorship at the University of Florida, spoke before the April meeting of the Jacksonville Historical Society. Research materials and facilities at the University available to local historical groups were discussed by the speaker.

James C. Craig, Society president, and other officers were reelected for the coming year. The Society plans to issue *Papers*, Volume IV, late this summer.

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Plans for the publication of a short history of Fernandina Beach have been made by The General Duncan L. Clinch Historical Society of Amelia Island. President William Galphin has appointed the following members to serve on publications and finance committees: William L. Webb, Mrs. Carol Barcus, George Hitchcock, Jr., Robert White and Reed Lewellen.

A membership newsletter, inaugurated last year, has aroused special interest with news of source material discoveries. For example, Charles W. Arnade and Bill Griffen, working in the Stetson Collection at the University of Florida, found detailed records of a wooden stockade known as the "Mission of St. Catherine." The Society is now busily searching for the site of this structure. William I. Hair, Florida State University, a recent speaker before the Society, has supplied evidence that still another flag, the ninth, flew over Amelia Island.

Samuel Proctor, University of Florida, author of *Napoleon Bonaparte Broward: Florida's Fighting Democrat*, spoke before the Society in March on filibustering activities at Fernandina Beach during the Spanish American War. Hale Smith, Florida State University, has assisted the Society in excavating a recently discovered site and spoke to the group on "Archaeological Methods of Dating."

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Wayne E. Withers, Miami, was elected president of the Historical Association of Southern Florida at its annual meeting in April. Charlton W. Tebeau, elected vice president, is also editor of the Society's excellent annual publication, *Tequesta*. Other officers are August Burghard, second vice president; Justin P. Havee, executive secretary; Miss Virginia Wilson, recording and corresponding secretary; Robert M. McKay, treasurer and Mrs. Andrew J. Moulds, librarian.

Dr. Richard D. Mudd spoke at the Society's February meeting before an enthusiastic and record audience. His paper, "The Lincoln Assassination and Imprisonment of the Conspirators" brought out new facts surrounding the imprisonment at Fort Jefferson of his grandfather, Dr. Samuel Mudd who treated John Wilkes Booth.

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The St. Augustine Historical Society is undoubtedly the most active group in the state in the fields of historic publication and of research. Translation of pertinent documents in the Stetson Collection and archaeological excavations currently highlight the Society's research projects. Hale G. Smith, Florida State University, in cooperation with the St. Johns County Commission, has uncovered the foundations of the old power magazine used during the second Spanish occupation. The discovery of glazed roof tile fragments was the first evidence of its use in St. Augustine. This summer Dr. Smith will conduct investigations of other sites within the Old City area.

Mrs. Marmaduke Hamilton Floyd of Savannah spoke at the April meeting of the Society on "The Island of Minorca Today, its Archives and the Historical Background of the Minorcans of Florida." Mrs. Floyd spent the last six months in Minorca.

A leaflet outlining the principal events in the history of St. Augustine has been released by the Society. This "Capsule History" is designed for readability and attractiveness. (Other historical societies could well take note . . . and write the St. Augustine Society for copies.)

#### *The Restoration of St. Augustine Program*

Copies of the report on the restoration of St. Augustine are available from the Board of Parks and Historic Memorials, Tallahassee.

hassee. The report was prepared by a Special Advisory Committee to the Park Board, appointed by Governor LeRoy Collins.

### *A Gift From Spain*

In a colorful ceremony at the Spanish Embassy in Washington on October 11, 1958, Under Secretary of the Interior Elmer F. Bennett accepted for the United States a gift of a rare set of antique Spanish military weapons from the Government of Spain presented by the Spanish Minister of the Army, Lt. Gen. Antonio Barroso Sanchez-Guerra.

The weapons, seven in all, are similar to those used by Spanish soldiers at various times during the Spanish-English struggle for southeastern America from the mid-16th through the 18th century. They will be used by the National Park Service as exhibits at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument in St. Augustine, to help interpret for the American people the story of the Spanish garrisons that were stationed at the famous old Spanish fort for periods covering 250 years. Other antique arms shipments will follow.

In appreciation for the unique gift, Under Secretary Bennett presented to General Barroso, in behalf of the Department of the Interior's National Park Service, a gold-sealed gift certificate and a framed copy of an 1835 Audubon color engraving of a shore bird against the background of Castillo de San Marcos.

Under Secretary Bennett commended General Barroso for his efforts in having the arms shipped from the Museum of the Spanish Army in Madrid, where they have been preserved over the years, and for taking time out from his inspection tour of U. S. military installations to make the presentation. He also paid tribute to the Spanish Military Attache, Colonel Miranda, whose first visit to Castillo de San Marcos two years ago inspired him to seek the gift of the weapons from his government.

One of the most interesting of the museum pieces is a 16th century matchlock musket, the principal arm of the Spanish infantry from about 1540 to 1710. The octagonal-barreled musket was discharged by bringing a lighted wick into contact with the powder.

Other weapons in the donated collection include a 16th century knife by the celebrated Spanish knifemaker, Juan Sedacho of Toledo; a 16th century wheel lock musket encrusted with

copper and brass; three 18th century pieces: a flintlock pistol, a Spanish halberd with four-sided point and axehead, and a brass-mounted knife adapted for placing in the bore of a gunbarrel for use as a bayonet; also, a 19th century flintlock carbine. (From a National Park Service News Release, October 11, 1958.)

### *The Francis Copp Home*

A few years ago, the late Dr. Francis Copp offered his historic home (known as the Chalker House) in Middleburg to the Florida Historical Society. The Society regrettably declined the gift for financial reasons. It is a pleasure to learn that the house will be preserved by its present owner, Randolph C. Griffith of Orlando. Mr. Griffith is a descendant of the Chalker family of Middleburg.

### *The Audubon House in Key West*

Colonel Mitchell Wolfson of Miami has purchased the Audubon House in Key West thereby saving this historic building from destruction. The house will be restored and converted into a museum honoring John James Audubon. It was in the garden of this house that Audubon painted "The White Crowned Pigeon," one of the paintings in his *Birds of America*. Colonel Wolfson's generosity is worthy of the sincere appreciation of the people of Florida.

### *A Plea*

Your News and Notes Editor needs copy from all local historical societies. Please send information on activities, meetings, elections. Details on newly formed societies are especially desired. The same for historical commissions.

College history departments are urged to send personal notes on new staff members, activities of personnel, publications.

Address correspondence to News and Notes Editor, Florida Historical Society, P. O. Box 3645, University Station, Gainesville, Florida.